

GABEL CENTER

HAIR RESTORATION

Instruction Booklet

Prepared by

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PREOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAIR TRANSPLANT

A. PRESCRIPTIONS

Prescriptions will be provided to you on the day of surgery unless you specifically request to have the prescriptions filled at your pharmacy. This must be arranged with our office at least one week prior to your procedure. Check with the office as to continuing or discontinuing any other medications that you take regularly. Please notify the office of any allergies to medications. We will also need to have a list of your current medications.

Description of Medications provided on day of surgery

Cephalexin (Keflex) or Clindamycin (Cleocin): This is an antibiotic to reduce the risk of infection. You will take one capsule twice a day for 5 days. After the procedure, follow the directions on the bottle until finished. If you are allergic to Keflex, a different antibiotic will be used.

Diazepam (Valium): This is a relaxant. Dr. Gabel will administer this medication prior to the procedure for relaxation.

Hydrocodone (Vicodin): This is a pain medication that can be taken every 4 – 6 hours as needed for pain. If you are sensitive to Vicodin, please alert the office.

Prednisone: This helps minimize swelling during the postoperative period. After the day of surgery, take the medication as directed on the bottle.

Polysporin Ointment: This is an over the counter antibiotic ointment that will be applied lightly to the sutured area 1 – 2 times daily for 12 days.

Ibuprofen (Motrin®): This is an over the counter anti-inflammatory medication that you need to purchase prior to the procedure. You will only use this after the procedure, not before. After surgery, take 2 tablets (400 mg) with a meal, followed by 2 tablets twice a day for three days after the procedure. Do not exceed 12 tablets in one 24-hour period.

B. PRECAUTIONS:

There are several over the counter medications that should be avoided prior to surgery. Do not take aspirin, Vitamins E & B, Advil®, Alka-Seltzer®, Bufferin®, Excedrin®, Empirin®, Motrin®, Ibuprofen, or other anti-inflammatory medications. In addition, do not take any herbal products such as Ginko or weight-lifting formulas for 2 weeks prior to your procedure. If you are on any of these medications, please stop them 2 weeks prior to surgery if OK by the prescribing physician.

If you take medications on a regular basis, ask Dr. Gabel if any should be discontinued prior to the procedure.

Do not drink alcohol for at least 3 days prior to surgery.

Please avoid foods with a large amount of herbs and spices at least 2 weeks prior to surgery. These tend to cause excess bleeding.

Please avoid smoking or using nicotine products for at least one week before and at least one week after your procedure. These may slow your healing process and contribute to less than optimal graft growth.

Do not use minoxidil (Rogaine®) for 4 weeks prior to the procedure.

Depending on your health, you may receive a prescription to have blood work or a medical clearance to be performed prior to your procedure. The results should be forwarded to our office at least 3 weeks prior to surgery.

C. IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR SURGERY:

Wash your hair, neck, and face well the night before and morning of the procedure with Dial Antibacterial Soap. Lather for at least 3 minutes with the soap. If you wear a hairpiece or hair system, please make sure it is removed prior to your shower the evening before surgery and not replaced before your procedure. Please remove all glue products from your scalp prior to surgery.

Be sure to eat your normal meal the morning of surgery. It is important to have breakfast prior to arrival at the office. Please avoid caffeine as this may raise your blood pressure. Decaffeinated coffee is okay to drink the morning of surgery. If you are scheduled for surgery in the afternoon, have a light lunch before you arrive. If you have any particular snacks, lunch items, or drinks that you prefer, please bring them as you will have plenty of opportunity to eat and drink throughout the day.

It is best to leave your hair long in the back and the sides so that it will cover the sutures or staples after your procedure.

On the night before the transplant, get a good night's sleep.

Wear comfortable clothing the day of your procedure. Do not bring any valuables to the office on the day of surgery, and please wear a button down, zippered, or wide necked shirt that can be easily taken off and put on over your head. Do not wear clothes that you have to worry about getting soiled.

If you plan to wear a hat after surgery please bring a few with you to the office on the day of your procedure. Dr. Gabel will help you select the most suitable fitting hat and instruct you on how to best put it on and remove it.

If you have CDs or DVDs that you would like to listen to during the procedure, please bring them as we may be able to connect them to our system for your listening pleasure.

For sleeping after surgery, an airplane “U” shaped pillow or rolled up towels placed behind your head and around your shoulders will help with comfort and to protect the surgical area.

Notify the office before taking any new types of medication prior to surgery.

Avoid excessive exercise and sweating (such as a sauna) the day before surgery, as they can dehydrate you and make you light-headed later. If you have been exercising a lot during the week before, be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

If you have been sick during the week before the planned surgery, please call Dr. Gabel before surgery to discuss the appropriateness of going ahead with the procedure or not.

Remember – Relax. You will be well taken care of. We have plenty of movies to watch and music to listen to during the procedure to help pass the time. The day actually goes by very quickly and we are ready to assist you at all times.

D. DEPOSIT AND PAYMENT

All patients must make a deposit at the time of scheduling. This deposit will be subtracted from the total amount owed. If paying with a personal check, the total estimated fee for surgery (minus the deposit) must be received two weeks before the procedure so that the funds can clear. Payment on the day of surgery is acceptable with a credit card, cash, money order or any type of certified check. If paying by a credit or debit card, it is important that you call the card company and inform them that a big charge will occur on the surgery day. Without a phone call, it is likely that the charge will not go through due to fears of fraud by the credit card company, and debit cards often have a \$3000 daily charge limit.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise in your schedule. You may reschedule your surgery without loss of the full deposit. We only require that you give us at least two weeks notice prior to the scheduled surgery. There will be a \$100 processing fee subtracted from the refund.

E. TRANSPORTATION

It is recommended that you do not drive yourself home after surgery, so make arrangements for transportation to and from the office. When you arrive at the office, please provide the staff with the name of the person whom you have made the arrangements with. Following your surgery, the office will call the person to pick you up. If you choose, your ride may wait in the waiting area for you.

F. ITEMS TO PURCHASE PRIOR TO SURGERY

Prior to surgery, please obtain the following items and medications:

- Ibuprofen (Motrin®)
- Dial Antibacterial Soap
- **Travel “U” shaped pillow if desired.**
- If you are obtaining your prescriptions from your pharmacy, you will need to purchase Ibuprofen and polysporin ointment

G. REVIEW THE “PATIENT SELF-CHECK LIST”

Review the “Patient Self-Check List” and preoperative and postoperative instructions during the weeks before your procedure, and the night before the procedure. Please fill out the patient checklist prior to the morning of the procedure and bring it with you the morning of surgery. The staff will ask you for it when you arrive.

H. QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding the preoperative instructions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Gabel to have your questions answered.

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAIR TRANSPLANT

Please follow all postoperative instructions. They will aid in your comfort and help promote the best possible healing and results. If you have questions regarding these directions, please call the office to have them answered. A transplant is a complex procedure with certain inherent risks. If you follow your doctor's advice and directions, the risk of complications in this procedure is small. Anything you do against your doctor's advice increases the chances of you having suboptimal results or complications.

A. CARE OF THE TRANSPLANTED AREA

Care should be taken while cleaning the transplanted site during the week following hair transplant surgery because it is during this period that the healing mechanisms of your body secure the grafts firmly in place. Appropriate care of the recipient area will minimize crusting and make the transplant less noticeable and the healing more rapid.

Dr. Gabel will provide you with Johnsons & Johnson's baby shampoo for use after surgery. Use this shampoo following surgery until it is gone. After this time, you may resume your own shampoo. Avoid dandruff shampoos for three weeks after the transplant.

1. Evening of Surgery (Day 0):

Do not wash or wet your hair the night of surgery. Allow the grafts to heal in place. Apply cool packs to forehead for 10 – 15 minute intervals a few times prior to bedtime to help with swelling. If a bandage was placed on your head after surgery, remove this carefully as directed by the staff prior to bedtime. Make sure you eat a meal after surgery as taking medication on an empty stomach may cause nausea. Take two tablets (400 mg total) of ibuprofen when you get home. If you took Ibuprofen before leaving Dr. Gabel's office, then you do not need any more that evening. If you have more pain, take the pain medication that was prescribed.

2. Day 1:

If you have a postoperative appointment arranged with Dr. Gabel, do not wash your scalp prior to arrival at the office. Dr. Gabel and his staff will do the first washing in the office.

3. Day 2 – 3:

Shower twice per day. **DO NOT ALLOW THE SHOWER TO SPRAY ON THE GRAFTED AREA and DO NOT RUB THE TRANSPLANTED AREA.** Add a dime size amount of shampoo to a plastic cup and fill the cup with warm water. Pour this over your transplanted area several times to clean the transplanted area. Gently massage the incision at the back of your scalp (donor area) with your fingers to remove any blood or blood products. Following this, use the plastic cup to rinse your scalp with plain warm water.

Use the spray bottle given to you after surgery to spray the grafted area and donor area with warm water to remove any remaining dried blood. It is imperative that the scalp and suture area are clean and free of blood or scabs for proper healing. It is not necessary to remove all the dried blood during your first shower. You may use the spray bottle provided to you to spray the grafted area every 3 – 4 hours to keep the area clean and moist.

After the shower while your hair is still wet, apply a thin layer of polysporin ointment to the sutured area so that it lightly covers the sutures or staples. Blot your hair with a towel (or allow it to air dry) and brush hair in the back of the scalp gently. Do not rub your hair dry. This may dislodge the grafts. The hair may be blow-dried using a cool setting.

4. Day 4 through Day 6 following surgery:

Continue to shower once a day as described above until the shampoo given to you runs out and then you may resume using your regular shampoo (do not use dandruff shampoo). You may allow the transplanted area to be sprayed with a low pressure/gentle shower but do not rub the transplanted area.

Additionally, once or twice a day, gently dab the mineral oil given to you onto the transplanted area using cotton balls soaked with mineral oil. Continue to apply a light layer of polysporin ointment to the donor area daily.

5. Day 7 through Day 21 following surgery:

Continue to shower once a day as described above.

Additionally, once a day, fill the bathtub with warm water. Lay back and allow the transplanted area to soak in the warm water for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, while in the bathtub, using the pads of your fingertips, gently rub in a circular motion the transplanted grafts to remove the loosened crusts. You will continue to do this once a day until all crusting is gone and all that can be seen are the short transplanted hairs. It may take 1 or 3 days to get most of the crusting (dead skin) off. Don't rush it, but by day 10, your scalp should not have any crusting.

Continue to apply a light layer of polysporin ointment to the donor area for two days after your sutures are removed or for a total of 12 days following surgery.

DO NOT PICK OR SCRATCH THE GRAFTS, as this may dislodge the grafts.

IMPORTANT: At 1 – 4 weeks post-op, you can expect that some transplanted hair will begin to shed. This is a normal process and should not be a concern as all the transplanted grafts will shed during this time.

B. BANDAGES

You will go home with a “wrap around the head” bandage that you will take off before you go to bed on the evening of surgery. If you feel the bandage may rub the grafted area, remove it. If you have any concerns about the possibility of needing a bandage for more than one day, please ask.

C. BLEEDING

It is normal to have some light drainage from the transplant and donor sites the evening of the procedure. You may want to place an old pillowcase or towel on your pillow the night following your procedure. Do the following if you notice continual bleeding from the transplant or donor site: Apply steady, firm pressure with a gauze pad over the area for 15 minutes without lifting the pad during that time period. If the bleeding continues, notify Dr. Gabel through the answering service by calling 503-693-1118.

D. SLEEPING

Do not sleep with your head or face in a “down” position. This may contribute to facial swelling. Sleep with your head elevated approximately 20 degrees for three nights following the procedure. You can use a recliner chair or several pillows. An airplane “U” shaped pillow or rolled up towels placed behind your head will help to keep your head in an upright and central position. Do not allow anything to rub against the grafted area. It is OK to rest the sutured area on the pillows or towels.

E. SWELLING

Some patients have a puffiness or swelling over the forehead at about the third or fourth day, which usually only lasts for two to three days. It may even spread down to around the eyes and nose causing significant, temporary swelling around the eyes. Apply cold packs two to three times a day for 15-minute periods to the forehead and temples for at least 48 hours following the procedure to minimize swelling. Plastic bags of frozen peas work well for this. Avoid foods that have high sodium content. Salty foods will aggravate any swelling that may occur.

F. INFECTION – TO AVOID INFECTION, DO THE FOLLOWING:

Clean your scalp and transplanted area before and after surgery as directed in this booklet. For the first week, avoid dirty environments, heavy lifting, or sporting activities that cause you to perspire.

Take the antibiotics as directed.

G. HEALING

Leave your head open to air as much as possible. Avoid the use of hairpieces unless absolutely necessary for 21 days after surgery. If you plan to wear these, let us know so we can instruct you on proper positioning.

The transplanted area should not be exposed to prolonged, direct sunlight for three months. You may use a hat to cover the transplanted area. Be careful putting the hat on and taking it off so it does not rub the transplanted area. Please ask the staff and we will demonstrate how to do this.

Immediately after surgery, you should take it easy. The best thing to do is to sit in a comfortable lounge chair and read, watch TV, or nap. Try to keep your head upright during the day. It is important not to exert yourself for at least two weeks after surgery.

Refrain from alcoholic beverages for one week.

Refrain from using aspirin and/or related drugs for one week. Tylenol is an approved medication during this time. The day after the procedure, you may go back to taking all your regular medications.

H. COMBING

Avoid combing or brushing over the transplanted area for seven days, and after that be very careful not to catch the comb on the grafts. The donor area in the back can be combed immediately, but be careful not to catch the comb in the sutures.

I. SUTURES/STAPLES

Sutures or staples will be removed in 7 – 10 days following surgery. Your appointment should be made and confirmed prior to leaving the surgery center. If you are an out of town patient, please arrange to have the sutures or staples removed after 10 days. It is very important to keep the area clean as directed above. If dissolvable sutures were used for your procedure, they will dissolve on their own and will not need to be removed.

J. AVOID FLEXING YOUR HEAD DOWNWARD

Flexion of your head downward puts additional tension on the incision line and may cause a larger scar. Keeping your “chin up” will help avoid the extra tension and help minimize the scar. I recommend this for about two months until the incision has completely healed. Don’t be afraid to flex your head; just minimize putting your chin to your chest.

K. NUMBNESS

You will most likely experience numbness at and around the area that has been transplanted. Sensation will begin to return in approximately six to eight weeks following surgery, but may last several months.

L. CRUSTS

The crusts will fall off in about one to two weeks. Do not pick them off. Following the cleaning instructions will help minimize prolonged crusting.

M. TEMPORARY HAIR LOSS (SHOCK LOSS)

Temporary hair loss or shock loss may occur along the incision line or other areas of the scalp. This is due to the irritation of the hair root from the surgical procedure. Hair growth will start to return around three months, the same time the grafts should be starting to grow.

N. LOSS OF TRANSPLANTED GRAFTS

The grafts take about two to three weeks to become part of the surrounding scalp. It is important not to bump or rub your head during this time as this could result in loss of the transplanted grafts.

O. REDNESS TO SCALP

There may be a red hue to the scalp at the transplanted site. This will resolve over time. This is completely normal, so please do not be concerned.

P. PAIN

In most cases, there is usually only minimal discomfort after a transplant procedure - even after a large number of grafts have been placed. Occasionally, some patients will have a significant headache – most commonly in the donor area. You will be supplied with medication to relieve the pain. We have found that patients who take the ibuprofen as directed have very little discomfort following surgery. Do not drive or operate machinery or drive while taking the prescription pain medication.

Q. ITCHING

You may experience some itching either in the transplanted area or in the donor area following your hair restoration procedure. In general, itching is part of the healing process and should not be a cause for concern.

A common contributing factor may be dryness. Keep polysporin ointment on the incision site and apply mineral oil daily to the grafted area starting 4 days following the procedure for moisture. If the itching at the donor site is bothersome to you, purchase Hydrocortisone Ointment 1% in 30 gram tubes which may be bought over the counter. This medication must be in an Ointment form, not a cream. This may be applied to the donor (incision site) areas that itch, as needed, up to four times a day. Do not apply to the grafted area.

DO NOT SCRATCH THE SCALP as this may dislodge grafts. You may also experience itching as the new hairs grow in.

R. ACTIVITIES

The day after your hair transplant, take it easy. You will be tired from the surgery and the medications received. If possible, spend this day at home, or in a comfortable place, and concentrate on showering properly and following the post-op instructions. Abstain from sexual activities and alcohol for THREE days after the procedure. If possible, it is best not to resume smoking for 1 week.

S. EXERCISE

The concern with exercise is two-fold. First of all, you want to keep the transplanted area clean and not exert pressure to the scalp which may dislodge the grafts. Secondly, the sutured area is healing. Straining or stretching the back of the neck may predispose to a wider scar, and should be avoided. In general, exercises such as sit-ups (especially with your hands clasped behind your head), squats, or bench presses will strain the back of the neck and should be avoided for at least 4 weeks post-op.

If the back of the neck feels tight after 4 weeks, or if you have a tendency to heal with wide scars, these activities should be avoided for 2 months. Exercises such as walking up an incline, lifting very light weights, and isolated leg exercises may be started within a few days after your procedure, if you feel up to it. You may perform limited low stress daily activities and easy exercise for the next 14 days. Since the impact of exercise will vary greatly from person to person, “cookbook” recommendations are not possible.

Remember, the donor wound will not regain its full strength for at least 3 – 6 months after hair transplant surgery, so a reasonable degree of caution should be exercised during this period. You must use your own good judgment and call us if you have questions.

T. SUN

Please avoid unprotected exposure to sunlight for 3 months. Wear a hat when you are going to be outside for a prolonged period of time (greater than 20 minutes). The staff will show you how to put on and take off the hat to minimize any risk to the transplanted grafts and sutured area. After three weeks, you may apply a strong sunscreen with a SPF of 15+ to the transplanted area.

U. GROWTH OF TRANSPLANTED HAIRS

Remember, new hair growth will not start for at least three months. Prior to this, the transplanted hairs will shed and the grafted area will look bare. Be patient during the growth process. It takes a full year or more to achieve a final result. The outcome will be well worth the wait.

V. REMEMBER – I want to emphasize a few important points:

The hair that we transplanted today goes into a “rest phase” and will not start to grow for about three to six months. Some hairs may take off and grow from the start, but these are the exception.

When the small scabs from the transplanted grafts fall off, the short bristly hairs that are in the scab usually fall off also. This does not mean that you have lost that hair or that graft unit.

It is important to keep your scalp clean in the weeks and months following surgery to allow the new hairs to come through the skin. Remember that you can shampoo as you normally have done three weeks after surgery. Two months after surgery, you may develop a small, swollen “cyst” under one of the graft sites (usually 2 – 3 months after the transplant). This is not uncommon after hair transplant surgery; virtually everyone will develop a few pimples in the recipient area starting at about a month following hair transplant surgery and continue for several months. This happens because new hairs are trying to break through the skin. They occasionally can be confused with a true infection, but pimples tend to resolve on their own in 3 – 4 days. They generally do not require treatment. Larger pimples can be unroofed by removing the thin top layer of skin with a sterile needle, and then any fluid can drain. If more than just a few develop at one time, or the skin in a larger area becomes swollen, red, tender, and hot, then you should call the office immediately as antibiotics or drainage by the doctor may be necessary.

Swelling and/or tenderness in the sutured area may be a sign of an infection. Fever and/or chills are also indications of infection as well. If these conditions occur, please contact the office.

If this is your second transplant session, please remember that the results will not be quite as dramatic as with the first session. This is for a couple of reasons: first of all, the hair from the first session mixes in with the newly transplanted hair and is not as easily recognized as “new” hair.

Also, the first session has the advantage of hair appearing out of nowhere or mostly balding skin which gives it a more dramatic effect.

W. QUESTIONS

If you require medical help related to the hair transplant, call the office (503-693-1118) and you will be connected to Dr. Gabel or the physician on call who will direct your care.

5/2014